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**Creating Great Birthday Party Videos**

By Colton Wright

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**Creating Great Birthday Party Videos**

By Colton Wright, [Digz-it.com](http://Digz-it.com)

My son recently had his third birthday party and it was mayhem. There were kids all over the place doing all sorts of funny things with parents following them around trying to prevent the next catastrophe. Believe it or not, this environment makes for a fantastic video. The key is to plan a little before heading into the chaos.

**Sequence of Activities**

First think in general terms about the sequence of events that go into a party. At first, all you may envision are children running around and the best strategy is to sit back, and tape events as they occur from a safe, comfortable distance. After all, how can you possibly control how your video will turn out with the certain anarchy that will ensue? Well, the answer is to pick your spots. The `spots' I'm talking about are those more creative moments you don't want to miss.

**Preparty**

- The birthday wish list
- Sending invitations
- Buying the cake
- Decorating
- Creating goodie bags

### **Party Time**

- Friends arrive with presents
- Everyone gets comfortable
- Entertainment arrives
- Lots of laughing, singing, dancing, kazooing (is that a word?).
- Let the games begin
- The Birthday Procession
- Now the real mess: cake and ice cream
- Finally, the presents
- The goodie bags and farewell

### **Perspective**

To really make a great birthday video, be creative and think about the world through a child's eyes for a moment. Kids get excited for a reason. They have all their friends over, most rules go out the door, and there are games, cake, ice cream, and presents; what else could make a child more excited? On top of this, your child is right in the middle of it all, loosing their breath trying to keep track of who's doing what, where, how and why. The goal is to capture that excitement, and it doesn't mean standing in the corner, towering 6 feet over the scene panning back and forth with a wide angle lens filming. You're going to have to do some extreme filming for a few minutes and get down in the action.

### **Walk Through**

Now let's get creative. What I would like to do is walk through the party and give you some examples of creative camera work that will make your videos more exciting to film, edit and share. I don't expect you to use all of these ideas in one video, but using just a few will improve your storytelling dramatically.

### **Preparty taping**

Taping all the preparty items will probably only take less than 10 minutes in total but this video will come in handy when editing. These moments are difficult to plan, so an idea is to keep your video camera fully charged and in an easy to reach spot. This way when the discussion of what they want for their birthday comes up, you'll be able to capture the moment quickly.

The preparty video you tape will be good flashback material. For example, as you tape your child opening their favorite present, you may want to include a brief flashback to when they initially told you what they wanted and how bad they wanted it. Flashbacks can also be used to show before and after shots of the cake or your home before and after the destruction.

### **The Party**

One of the best techniques to make your final video more interesting is to create a few scenes where the viewer experiences the party from the child's perspective. These are commonly called point of view shots. This involves getting down to their level, literally.

Friends arrive with presents

This is a great opportunity for capturing some interesting conversations between the children as they

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arrive. Try to get your son or daughter to greet the first few arrivals. Kneel down and tape over their shoulder so that the person they are speaking to takes up maybe 2/3 of the frame. For the effect, it should be filmed from the height of the kids. For a more dramatic, meeting of the minds, effect, move the camera around so that it is looking slightly up at the two as they talk. Or, start over the shoulder of one of the subjects and move around to the shoulder of the other.

Note: An important comment is in order here. If you are filming indoors during the day, make sure that you are positioned between your subject and the outside light source (ie. your windows). The primary reasons for this are 1) natural light is an excellent light source and 2) if you shoot a darkened subject against a bright background, the auto-exposure on your camera will compensate for the bright background and darken your subject further. You will essentially end up with a very dark subject (underexposed) with little color and a very bright, white background. Actually, this is the opposite effect of taking a night, flash photo outdoors of your friends against a beautiful city skyline. Your friends end up too bright (overexposed) and the background is entirely black.

Everyone gets comfortable

If your party is at a playground with a slide and swing set, then take the camera down the slide or on

the swing set. Climb on the jungle gym and hold your camera knee high and chase the kids. You can obviously do the same at indoor play areas or at home as the children play with the toys. As you edit your video, you can work in these point of view clips.

Entertainment Arrives

A typical setup for an Entertainment scene is where the children are gathered together and watch a performance. A good shot is to sit behind the children and peer through the crowd at the performer. Then shoot a few close ups of the children's faces from behind the performer. If the kids stand up and dance or play a game, stand with them, hold the camera knee high and mingle. You can edit these point of view clips to create a nice final scene.

Let the Games Begin

Playing games is one of the highlights of being a kid. Try to immerse your viewer in the moment and capture the excitement. One of my son's friends had a piñata at their birthday party. You can create a great scene by filming another point of view shot before the party begins. Hold the camera and stick together so the stick is visible in the shot. Wave the stick around and pretend to hit the piñata. Once you are at the party, and the children have gathered for the fun, stand in the center with your camera knee high and turn around a few times. Now, step back and tape the actual blindfolding and stick waving from a distance. Your final edited clip will include your child being blindfolded, spun around (from their point of view), the stick trying to locate the piñata (from its point of view) and finally the candy and toys that result from a direct hit.

The Birthday Procession

Many different birthday traditions exist in the world but the one most followed by Americans is the birthday cake with candles, a happy birthday song, a wish and blowing out the candles. Birthdays were originally reserved for royalty, hence the crowns kids often wear at parties. Taping this scene could have a royal feeling to it as you tape a close up of the lighting of the candles, the act of proceeding to

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the table with the cake, the singing, the wish and finally the attempt to blow them all out. Try and create the feeling of a grand gathering, using a wide angle to capture all the family and friends who attended. This makes a scene fit for a King or Queen.

### Now the Real Mess: Cake and Ice Cream

This is a great opportunity to capture some video of some cute messy faces. Tape a few face close-ups and some wide angle shots of the scene. When you edit the video, try using the slow motion function as a scoop of ice cream falls off a cone or as the cake doesn't quite make it into a mouth. Or, try increasing the speed of the scene while editing and show the kids devouring their whole plate of cake and ice cream in under 10 seconds. Using various speeds can make these scenes really funny.

### Finally, the Presents

Opening the presents is a much fun for parents as it is for their children. Bring the camera level with your child's eyes and catch their reaction as they open their gifts. If you're really ambitious, you can cut a hole in the bottom of a box, push the camera lens against the hole and film as they open the box. Place something silly in the box so when they open it, you capture their smile. In addition, the video you taped prior to the party of your son or daughter explaining what they wanted for their birthday can be used here as a flashback. It's magical to see a child's wishes come true.

### The Goodie Bags and Farewell

The goodie bags and the mess are all that is left. Try to put a fun item in the goodie bags that the kids can wear. A few ideas include a funny clown nose, silly glasses, candy lips, or tiaras. You can gather

the kids together at the end for a funny shot of their new identities. Have them wave goodbye to the camera for the farewell scene.

### **Parting Words**

I hope that you have a better understanding of how to create a more exciting birthday video using various camera angles and editing techniques. Remember that the goal is to fit just a few of these ideas into your finished video. You can accomplish your goal with just a little planning and by picking your spots at the party. With a little thought, you can adapt these ideas to any party situation. Good luck and have fun!

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Colton Wright is a writer for <http://www.digz-it.com> , a video and photo sharing website targeted to families.

### **What Party Supplies do I need to make my party a Hit?**

#### **By Mike Yeager**

The birthday party supplies you will need for a birthday party can be balloons, decorations, food and many other things. You will have to buy many different items for the party you're planning. Finding

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wholesale party supplies can also be helpful and can save you money. A theme party can also be great fun such as a pirate party, or an outdoor garden party. An important time in every person's life is graduation. There should be a graduation party for each graduate. Any type of graduation is very special. Some traditional gift ideas include money, clothing and other accessories. It's a big day and a graduation party is a wonderful way to celebrate that accomplishment. Why? Well it's because a graduation happens so rarely in a person's life.

You should buy discount party supplies to save money. If you buy discount party supplies you can really save some money compared to retail prices. Everyone has a birthday, which means that everyone will have some kind of birthday party. These parties should be very fun and interesting; you could even consider throwing a surprise party.

To make your life even more fun, try and attend at least 1 party this year and have fun.

Using the right party supplies is very important for any party you have. A well organized party with interesting and exciting party supplies will be remembered long after the occasion. Whether it's graduation party, birthday party or a relaxing outdoor summer party remember that the right party supplies and decorations really can make the difference.

Mike Yeager  
Publisher

What Party Supplies do I need to make my party a Hit?  
Looking for Birthday Party Ideas? Here are some great ideas.  
Baseball Theme Scores Home Run For Birthday Party Planning  
10 Great Ideas For A Baby's First Birthday  
Preparing The Perfect Birthday – How To Make Planning Quick And Easy

COCKTAILS - How to Make and Enjoy them  
How To Find A Topic For Your Ebook  
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